

**Town of Belmont  
Capital Budget Committee  
Belmont Town Hall, Room 4  
Thursday Evening, April 17, 2008, 7:30 p.m.**

Mrs. Brusch called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Members of the Committee present at the time of the call to order were: M. Patricia Brusch, Mark F. Clark, Jennifer M. Fallon, Daniel Leclerc and Anne Marie Mahoney. Also present were Thomas Younger, Town Administrator; Barbara Hagg, Town Accountant and staff liaison to the Capital Budget Committee and Ralph Jones. Diane Stafford and John Conte joined the meeting just prior to the votes of the Committee with respect to Articles 16 & 17 of the Warrant for the Annual Town Meeting (see below).

The Committee had the following material before it:

1. Agenda for the meeting prepared by Mark Clark, Secretary.
2. Drafts of motions to be presented under warrant articles at Annual Town Meeting, April 28, 2008, which was distributed by Ms. Hagg.

The significance of item 2 is that it shows that there are two motions to be presented under Article 10 and on the back of the last page it shows all enterprise appropriations, including those that are not funded by general tax. Later in the meeting, the Committee received from some residents of Horne Road their written statement regarding a project of development proposed for Cushing Square.

**General Discussion of Future Schedule**  
*(Item 5 on Committee Agenda)*

Mrs. Brusch announced that a meeting had been posted for 6:30 at the High School, just before the Annual Town Meeting on April 28, 2008. As far as she could see, however, such a meeting would not be needed. She announced that she would not call a meeting to order then unless a meeting is necessary and would notify members of this Committee just prior to Town Meeting if such a meeting is required. Mrs. Brusch also announced that she would, later in the meeting, ask for a reconsideration of this Committee's opinion concerning Article 20 on the warrant for the Annual Town Meeting. Her request will be based on information from and discussion at the meeting of the Warrant Committee held the previous evening.

**Interview with Ralph Jones**  
*(Item 2 on Committee Agenda)*

Mr. Jones presented the background and purposes for Article 16 & 17 and additional item under Article 11. He also answered incidental questions that were raised by members of the Committee during his presentation.

The Water Department has had a program for refurbishing the distribution system for water for several years, now a comparable program is being undertaken particularly with regard to the sanitary sewer system. Both the water system and the sanitary sewer system have reserve funds of over \$1 million. Furthermore, a 5% increase in the water rates and a 5.2% increase in charges to fund the sewer system (also regarding water rates) has been voted for the next year. The capital project regarding the sewer system will make use of rates, loans and reserves. In addition, a separate storm water fee is being discussed.

Article 16 relates to a grant/loan program made available by the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (“MWRA”). It deals with inflow and infiltration into the sanitary sewer system. Mr. Jones explained the difference between inflow and infiltration, and illustrated the impact of them upon the Town’s system. Mr. Jones is proposing a \$307,000 five-year loan from the MWRA which incurs no interest and is combined with a grant. Article 16 would authorize receiving that loan.

Article 17 would authorize a \$11.6 million borrowing under a subsidized federal program. The interest on this loan is 2% per annum but is only payable with regard to money that is actually “taken down” (that is, as and when money is actually received). Proceeds from this loan will be used to reline sewer pipes and replace two pumps on Belmont Hill. Budgeting for the future does include the assumption that this loan will have to be paid back beginning at the end of FY09.

**Action on Articles 16 & 17**  
*(Item 3 on Committee Agenda)*

Upon motions duly made and seconded, the Committee voted unanimously to recommend favorable action under Articles 16 & 17 on the warrant for the Annual Town Meeting.

**Further Action on Article 10 & 11**  
*(Item 4 on Committee Agenda)*

Upon Motion duly made and seconded, the Committee voted unanimously to recommend favorable action under Article 11 on the warrant for the Annual Town Meeting.

Mrs. Brusch pointed out that there are now two motions to be made under Article 10. One of the motions relates to the capital budget, approved by this Committee at its previous meeting. The new motion (which can be seen from the draft motions distributed by Ms. Hagg) relates to the override now proposed by the Selectmen in connection with the pavement management stabilization fund. The motion as proposed is contingent on

voter approval of the proposed override and would appropriate the proceeds of the override to the Road Stabilization Fund. Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Committee voted unanimously to recommend favorable action on Article 10's second motion.

### **Reconsideration of Article 20**

Mrs. Brusch explained that, at the Warrant Committee meeting the previous evening, the members of the Warrant Committee, after a long discussion, had voted (with one abstention) to ask the Selectmen to dismiss from the warrant for the Annual Town Meeting the Article 20 as proposed. Mrs. Brusch further explained that they had done so on the ground that they wished to know more detail concerning the way the Selectmen proposed to exercise the authority that would be granted to them pursuant to Article 20 as it stands now. Finally, Mrs. Brusch indicated that she wished to reconsider this Committee's opinion with regard to Article 20. She observed that she had voted in the affirmative with respect to this matter at the last meeting of this Committee and was thus entitled to move for reconsideration of that vote.

Mrs. Brusch moved that this Committee reconsider its recommendation for favorable action with regard to Article 20 on the warrant for the Annual Town Meeting. Dr. Stafford seconded Mrs. Brusch's motion. This Committee voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

Mrs. Brusch pointed out that residents in the area of the proposed development in Cushing Square (many of whom were in the room observing this Committee's meeting) had informed the Warrant Committee that they were not pleased with all aspects of the would-be developer's proposals for the development in Cushing Square. Mrs. Brusch stated that this Committee is entitled to know more specifically how the Selectmen will act with regard to the municipal parking lot in Cushing Square and the discontinuance of the last block on Horne Road. She cited instances in which this Committee had made similar requests of the Selectmen in the past.

Ms. Fallon pointed out that Article 20 had not been placed on the warrant by the Planning Board but the actions contemplated by Article 20 were consistent with the overlay district initiative that the Planning Board had put forward recently regarding Cushing Square. Moreover, in her opinion, a development consistent with the overlay district was important for Cushing Square. She also made the point that the process whereby a plan for Cushing Square could be developed under the overlay procedure provides many opportunities for community comment because development is only available by special permit and not by right.

Mr. Clark observed that Cushing Square needs a grocery store and that a would-be developer could not be expected to negotiate with the whole Town Meeting; sooner or later this matter would have to be delegated to the Selectmen. He did, however, iterate

the same comment regarding parking that he had mentioned at the last meeting: namely, that other merchants in Cushing Square are currently dependant on the municipal parking lot for parking space for their employees and are nervous about being dependant for parking on space controlled by a competitor.

Mr. Leclerc indicated that, when he was acting as a Selectman, he understood that the community and the would-be developer had come to terms with each other concerning the proposed development. Although Mr. Leclerc is reluctant to see the first step in the development of Cushing Square presented to Town Meeting in a form in which it may be defeated, he will not tolerate long delay.

Mr. Leclerc moved that this Committee ask the Selectmen to withdraw Article 20 from the warrant. Mr. Conte seconded that motion. During the discussion, at the request of Mr. Clark, Messrs. Leclerc and Conte agreed to expand their motion by including a request to the Selectmen that they bring the matter involved in Article 20 back to the Town Meeting no later than a town meeting in the fall.

After all members of this Committee had been given an opportunity to speak, Mrs. Brusch opened the floor to members of the community who were gathered in the meeting room. Several members of the community around Cushing Square took the opportunity to address this Committee and one, Donald Becker, distributed a written statement regarding concerns raised by the proposed Cushing Square project.

Mrs. Brusch called for a vote on Mr. Leclerc's motion as amended. This Committee voted in favor of the motion. (Five members voted in favor of the motion; no member voted in the negative; Ms. Fallon abstained.) Then Mrs. Brusch observed that the Selectmen might not withdraw Article 20 despite the recommendations of both this Committee and the Warrant Committee. She suggested that this Committee express its recommendation with respect to the possibility that Article 20 will be presented to the Annual Town Meeting.

Mr. Clark moved that, if the Selectmen do not withdraw Article 20 from the warrant, this Committee recommend favorable action with regard to Article 20. Ms. Fallon seconded the motion. Messrs. Clark and Leclerc and Ms. Fallon voted in favor of the motion. Mrs. Brusch, Dr. Stafford and Mr. Conte voted against the motion. Mrs. Mahoney abstained. Mrs. Brusch observed that based on the vote this Committee could not recommend favorable action, but that she could report the vote.

### **Adjournment**

*(Item 6 on Committee Agenda)*

The meeting was adjourned at about 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark F. Clark